

- 12 -

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A shaped article of manufacture comprising at least a surface layer formed of a composition comprising from about 80 parts by weight to less than about 99 parts by weight of vegetable-derived compound(s) and from about 1 part to about 20 parts by weight of insect wax, the combination of said vegetable wax and said insect wax together providing said surface layer with an appearance selected from the group consisting of a fingerprint pattern, a sunburst pattern, a marble pattern, a tortoise pattern, a spotted pattern and combinations of two or more of these.
2. The article of claim 1 wherein said vegetable-derived compound(s) comprise a mixture of vegetable wax and vegetable acid.
3. The article of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises from about 2% to about 15% by weight of insect wax.
4. The article of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises from about 4% to about 15% by weight of insect wax.
5. The article of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises from about 4% to about 10% by weight of insect wax.
6. The article of claim 1 wherein said article consists of said composition.
7. The article of claim 6 wherein said article is a candle.
8. A shaped article of manufacture comprising at least a surface layer formed of a vegetable-based composition, said composition comprising greater than about 80 parts by weight to less than about 98 parts by weight of vegetable-based compound(s) and

- 13 -

from about greater than about 2 parts by weight to less than about 20 parts by weight of insect wax.

9. The shaped article of claim 8 wherein said insect wax comprises beeswax.

10. The shaped article of claim 9 wherein said insect wax consists essentially of beeswax.

5 11. The article of claim 8 wherein said vegetable-based compound(s) comprise a combination of vegetable acid and vegetable wax.

12. The article of claim 11 wherein said vegetable acid comprises stearic acid and said vegetable wax comprises ester of stearic acid.

10 13. The article of claim 8 wherein said vegetable-based compound(s) comprise from about 70 parts by weight to about 90 parts by weight of stearic acid and from about 10 parts by weight to about 30 parts by weight of ester of stearic acid.

14. The article of claim 13 wherein said vegetable-based compound(s) consist essentially of stearic acid and ester of stearic acid.

15 15. The article of claim 13 wherein said vegetable-based compound(s) comprise about 80 parts by weight of stearic acid and about 20 parts by weight of ester of stearic acid.

16. The article of claim 15 wherein said vegetable-based compound(s) comprise about 80% by weight of stearic acid and about 20% by weight of ester of stearic acid.

20 17. A method of fabricating a molded article comprising:
providing a composition comprising vegetable-derived compound(s) and insect wax;
molding said composition into a desired shape, said molding step including introducing said composition into a mold;

- 14 -

and removing said molded composition from said mold, said composition containing said insect wax in amount effective to cause sufficient shrinkage of said molded article relative to said article without said insect wax to improve the release properties of said composition from said mold.

- 5 18. The method of claim 17 wherein said composition comprises at least about 1% by weight of insect wax.
19. The method of claim 18 wherein said insect wax comprises beeswax.
20. The method of claim 19 wherein said composition comprises at least about 3 weight percent beeswax.
- 10 21. The method of claim 17 wherein said vegetable-derived compound(s) comprise stearic acid.
22. The method of claim 17 wherein said vegetable-derived compound(s) comprise ester of stearic acid.